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RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 8634  
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UNCLAS COLOMBO 000746

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/INS AND EEB/CBA FOR DWINSTEAD AND TGILMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [BEXP](#) [BTIO](#) [ENIV](#) [ABUD](#) [ECON](#) [MV](#)

SUBJECT: MALDIVES: SUCCESSFUL AMERICAN PAVILION AT MAJOR HOTEL AND  
TRADE SHOW, JULY 15-17, 2008

REF: (A) STATE 72180

(B) STATE 73258

1. This is an action request for EEB/CBA. Please see para six.

2. Summary: Post is pleased to report the successful conclusion of the embassy-organized American Pavilion at an international trade fair in Maldives July 15-17, 2008. The American Pavilion once again helped to increase U.S. exports to Maldives. Ten U.S. companies, or their local partners, exhibited as part of the Pavilion. Many companies reported significant leads and new contracts. Noteworthy results from this year's show included increased sales for a company representing U.S. specialty-textile producer group Sunbrella, promising leads for 3M in different sectors, planned expansion of a pilot wind power project using U.S. equipment to a commercial scale, and the plan by a U.S. food and beverage exporter to increase sales to \$2 million in 2008. End Summary.

Early Results: Increasing U.S. Exports  
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3. The American Pavilion continued to be the major attraction for the third consecutive year at the Maldives Hotel and Trade Expo, drawing considerable interest from both government and private-sector representatives. The Ambassador played a pivotal role in drawing top level public and private representatives to the American Pavilion, personally introducing them to exhibitors. He also arranged several meetings with Maldivian officials at the site, helping to boost the profile of the Pavilion and its products.

Substantial outcomes:  
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4. Following are some positive results to date for companies that participated in the American Pavilion:

A. A company using U.S. Sunbrella fabric to manufacture canopies and awnings received considerable trade leads. It secured a new contract with one of Maldives most exclusive resorts.

B. A U.S. food and beverage exporter expanded his product range as a result the trade show. The company will now target \$2 million in sales to Maldives in 2008. (Note: The company's new local distributor was introduced to the company at a previous BFIF-funded event; he visited the U.S. earlier in 2008 on a trade visit.)

C. 3M reported many serious inquiries in several sectors, including telecom, electrical, construction, marine and outdoor advertising.

D. Cummins reported a successful show with new leads in the resort sector.

Emerging Prospects:  
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¶5. Some companies reported a satisfactory trade show and will actively follow up leads in order to conclude contracts and sales:

¶A. Cessna attracted keen interest from government and private officials. This is a sector for close follow-up as the Maldives has one of the largest sea plane fleets in the world.

¶B. A Middle East-based sports company representing U.S. sports equipment and technology, participating for the second consecutive year, generated useful leads and interest after a moderate start in ¶2007.

¶D. A U.S. golf cart dealer based in New Delhi participated in the American Pavilion for the first time. The company reported a small number of substantive leads that have real potential to convert to sales contracts.

¶E. A company promoting wind power projects that use U.S. technology is implementing a successful pilot project in Maldives. Through their exhibition at the American Pavilion and through additional efforts, there is a strong possibility of applying the technology commercially on to up to 100 islands in Maldives. President Gayoom, in recent meetings with the Ambassador, extended his strong support for such renewable energy programs in the wake of rising fuel costs. (Note: Ambassador and Gayoom attended the formal launch of the already-running pilot project earlier this year.)

#### ¶6. Expenditure Report and Action Request

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Post has exceeded budget by \$192 due to increased costs. Post kindly requests EEB/CBA to consider funding this additional amount.

Booth space and stall hire: \$7,000  
U.S. pavilion construction: \$3,000  
Decorations: \$800  
Promotional T-shirts: \$600  
Shipment and clearing charges: \$1,992  
Printing of banners: \$350  
Hire of additional display units: \$200  
Table and chairs: \$10  
Snack food for display/sampling: \$150  
Total: \$14,092.00

BFIF advances U.S. Commercial ties with Maldives

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¶7. Comment: Business Facilitation Incentive Funds (BFIF) have proven key in expanding U.S. exports to Maldives. Several companies now doing business -- worth millions of dollars -- in Maldives were introduced to the market by BFIF-supported events. The support received by BFIF in the early years of the trade show, when results were moderate, is mainly responsible for the current success of the American Pavilion. BFIF's belief that results would follow with time has been well rewarded. The continued support of the American Pavilion by BFIF is important to keep advancing U.S. exports in this market. Post strongly recommends continuation of funding for the American Pavilion at the Maldives Hotel and Trade Expo in 2009.  
BLAKE